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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/828,322	04/05/2001	Laurent Schaller	6835-60067 (0800195-46)	5639

33931 7590 09/09/2003  
LAW OFFICE OF HARRY J. MACEY  
1301 SHOREWAY ROAD, SUITE 121  
BELMONT, CA 94002-4106

EXAMINER

FERKO, KATHRYN P

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3743  
DATE MAILED: 09/09/2003  
4

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/828,322	SCHALLER ET AL.
Examiner	Art Unit	
Kathryn Odland	3743	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 April 2001.

2a) This action is **FINAL**.      2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

4) Claim(s) 1-30 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) 1-30 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) All b) Some \* c) None of:  
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_.  
4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_.  
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)  
6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Election/Restrictions***

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
  - I. Claims 1-26, drawn to a tissue connector, classified in class 606, subclass 151.
  - II. Claims 27-30, drawn to a surgical method, classified in class 128, subclass 898.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions I and II are related as product and process of use. The inventions can be shown to be distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product or (2) the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product (MPEP § 806.05(h)). In the instant case the specifics of the process/surgical method are not required for the apparatus/tissue connector. For example, the process/surgical method requires the sequence of positioning two piercing ends of a fastener near a first tissue, piercing the first tissue with piercing ends with the two clips in the open configuration, positioning a bridge along one side, piercing a second tissue with the two clips in an open configuration, drawing the clips in the open configuration through the second tissue and actuating a release mechanism. This sequence is not necessarily required for the apparatus/tissue connector and it can be used in alternate ways, such as with only one tissue.

3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.
4. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group I is not required for Group II, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

If either Group I or Group II is selected, further election is required.

5. This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention:

Species I: Figure 1

Species II: Figures 10A-10C

Species III: Figures 10D-10F

Species IV: Figures 14A-14B

If Species I-IV is selected a **single** subspecies must be elected or the entire subspecies not elected:

Choose a flexible member:

Subspecies A1: Figure 2A

Subspecies B1: Figure 2B

Choose a fastener:

Subspecies A2: Figures 3A-3C

Subspecies B2: Figure 4

Subspecies C2: Figures 5A-5B

Subspecies D2: Figure 6

Choose a release mechanism:

Subspecies A3: Figures 7A-7C

Subspecies B3: Figures 8A-8C

Subspecies C3: Figures 9A-9E

Choose a piercing member and/or suture release:

Subspecies A4: Figures 11A-11B

Subspecies B4: Figures 12A-12B

Subspecies C4: Figures 13A-13B

Choose a lateral tissue connector:

Subspecies A5: Figure 15.

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, claim 1 is generic.

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include

all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

6. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

***Specification***

7. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

A novel feature of the invention should be included in the title.

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kathryn Odland whose telephone number is (703) 306-3454. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (7:30-5:00) First Friday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Henry A Bennett can be reached on (703) 308-0101. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

KO

Henry Bennett  
Supervisory Patent Examiner  
Group 3743